



# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

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### New EEA Program Puts Massachusetts at the National Forefront of Managing Climate Change Impacts at the Local Level

*StormSmart Coasts workshops offer practical strategies to address  
storm damage and coastal flooding*

BOSTON – The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) today announced a nation-leading initiative to help shoreline communities cope with on-the-ground impacts of global climate change. Through its new StormSmart Coasts program, EEA's Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) will help the state's 78 coastal communities devise safe, economical, and practical ways for managing climate change-related hazards such as rising sea level and fiercer and more frequent storms.

"Climate change is an increasing concern in Massachusetts, with the erosion and flooding that it could cause along our coastlines," EEA Secretary Ian Bowles said. "StormSmart Coasts will work directly with coastal communities, giving them the tools they need to plan ahead and effectively address these challenges."

CZM will launch StormSmart Coasts with a series of tailored, regional workshops this month.

"With StormSmart Coasts, Massachusetts has developed a national model for implementing storm-resilient community strategies at the local level," said Margaret Davidson, Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coastal Services Center (CSC).

"CSC is so pleased to have provided Massachusetts with the Coastal Fellow who developed the program, and that our fellowships are making this kind of difference at the state, local, and national level."

CZM developed StormSmart Coasts to provide communities along Massachusetts's 1,500-mile shoreline with a suite of tools and strategies for managing coastal floodplains. The program offers technical assistance and legal guidance for cities and towns, regulatory tools, case studies, planning strategies, and an extensive website ([www.mass.gov/czm/stormsmart](http://www.mass.gov/czm/stormsmart)). Targeted audiences include municipal officials such as staff and members of Planning Boards, Conservation

Commissions, Zoning Boards of Appeals, Departments of Public Works, Building/Engineering Departments, Boards of Health, and emergency management planners.

“The cornerstone of our work at CZM is technical assistance to coastal communities,” said CZM Director Leslie-Ann McGee. “StormSmart Coasts is the result of our staff – land-use planners and coastal geologists partnering with national legal and engineering experts – working directly with local officials to develop tools that will benefit coastal towns and cities right here in Massachusetts.”

In its final report last May, the Massachusetts Coastal Hazards Commission recommended that the Commonwealth “establish a storm-resilient communities program to provide case studies for effective coastal smart growth planning.” CZM developed StormSmart Coasts in response to that recommendation.

“I’m pleased that Coastal Zone Management is launching the StormSmart Coasts Program, which will provide a wide variety of vital resources to assist coastal homeowners and town officials in preparing for and lessening the impact of damaging coastal storms,” said Representative Frank Hynes of Marshfield, a member of the Coastal Hazards Commission.

To introduce StormSmart Coasts, CZM will conduct four workshops from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the following locations:

- Wednesday, May 14: The Osborn Meeting Room at Norwell Town Hall
- Thursday, May 15: The Fort Rodman Community Center in New Bedford
- Wednesday, May 28: The Council Room at Barnstable Town Hall
- Thursday, May 29: Peabody Institute Library in Danvers

Each half-day workshop will feature specific information and examples of ways that communities can better protect property and people from coastal storms. Edward A. Thomas, Esq., of Michael Baker Jr. Engineering, a nationally recognized legal expert on these issues, has been invited to explain how communities can effectively develop plans and/or regulate. The workshops will also include a discussion of hypothetical proposed developments and ways for communities to plan, site, design, condition, and permit public infrastructure and private development to assure safety and fiscal responsibility.

For more information on the workshops, see [www.mass.gov/czm/calendar.htm](http://www.mass.gov/czm/calendar.htm).

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